



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF
HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, ROOM 2101
BOSTON, MA 02108
www.mass.gov/eohed

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JAY ASH
SECRETARY

TELEPHONE
(617) 788-3610

FACSIMILE
(617) 788-3605

URBAN AGENDA GRANT PROGRAM

A Program for Urban Neighborhoods in Massachusetts

Notice of funding availability, application criteria, and instructions - 2015 Application Cycle

The Commonwealth's Urban Agenda seeks to promote economic vitality and cultivate safer, stronger urban neighborhoods across Massachusetts.

The Urban Agenda economic development grant program recognizes that urban communities face unique economic and quality of life challenges. The Urban Agenda grant program also recognizes that every community in Massachusetts possesses a unique set of assets, and that the path to economic opportunity lies in tapping into local assets, rather than in one-size-fits-all directives.

Urban Agenda economic development grants seek to build leadership, collaboration, and capacity at the local level. The grant program seeks to unlock community-driven responses to local economic opportunities through partnership-building, problem-solving, and shared accountability.

Urban Agenda Economic Development Implementation grants will be administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. These grants will empower urban communities to advance employment and economic opportunity by providing flexible grant funding that supports creative local partnerships, and capitalizes on local economic opportunities. Urban Agenda Economic Development Implementation grants will challenge neighborhoods across Massachusetts to form partnerships that leverage existing economic assets, target specific workforce populations, define their economic development and quality of life goals, and then deliver on those goals.

Urban Agenda Planning and Technical Assistance grants will be administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. Grants will fund facilitated community planning to advance shared work on quality-of-life issues, and build coalitions and social capital within the community.

The Urban Agenda Housing Program will be administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development. The grant program seeks to increase the supply of multi-family housing across the Commonwealth for a range of incomes. Urban Agenda Housing Program grants will assist communities in expanding housing opportunities, particularly housing opportunities that leverage vacant or under-utilized publicly-owned land, by supporting predevelopment and soft costs related to multi-family housing construction and adaptive re-use of surplus or underutilized property.

More details regarding the grant program, and eligibility requirements, are outlined below.

	Economic Development Implementation Grants	Economic Development Planning and Technical Assistance Grants	Housing Program Grants
Maximum Award	\$500,000 (Projects of exceptional merit and complexity may be considered for higher awards)	\$50,000	\$200,000 (Projects of exceptional merit and complexity may be considered for higher awards)
Total Grant Pool	\$1,850,000	\$150,000	\$1,000,000
Anticipated Grant Duration	Two years (FY16-17) See contract details below	Two years (FY16-17) See contract details below	Two years (FY16-17) See contract details below
Grant use	Identify a specific local economic asset; apply economic assets to specific workforce population; engage in innovative partnerships	Identify opportunities for shared work on quality-of- life issues; encourage social capital building	Support the construction of multi-family housing by financing predevelopment and soft costs
Administering Agency	EOHED	EOHED	DHCD
Program Contact	Juan Vega	Juan Vega	Karen Bresnahan
Priority Economic Development Activities	Targeted workforce development	Community coalition building	Advancing multi-family housing that contributes to the economic and social vitality of communities
	Innovative vocational education activities	Neighborhood quality-of- life planning	Accelerating housing construction on publicly- owned land
	Main Streets and small business supports	Local leadership development and capacity building	Accelerating housing construction on other priority development parcels
	Mentorship for entrepreneurs		Creating housing serving a range of incomes, ages, and household sizes
Project examples (Illustrative only)	Training at-risk populations for culinary careers	Actionable neighborhood- level planning exercises	Predevelopment and soft costs associated with dense, mixed-income housing development
	Business plan training and entrepreneurial supports for women-, veteran-, and minority-owned businesses	Community leadership development	Eligible activities include: Schematic designs and site plans, community and resident engagement, market studies, financing

			plans, design documentation, engineering and environmental assessment, environmental remediation, and zoning review
	Maker spaces that engage youth in mechanical processes		
Eligible communities	Gateway Cities, and inner core cities and regional urban centers identified by MAPC	Gateway Cities, and inner core cities and regional urban centers identified by MAPC	Gateway Cities, and inner core cities and regional urban centers identified by MAPC
	With median household incomes below 90 percent of the state average income	With median household incomes below 90 percent of the state average income	With median household incomes below 90 percent of the state average income
	53 total communities	53 total communities	53 total communities
	One application per community EXCEPT One application per neighborhood in cities where population exceeds 150,000	One application per community EXCEPT One application per neighborhood in cities where population exceeds 150,000	Maximum two awards per community
Eligible lead applicants	Community-based organizations	Community-based organizations	Local housing authorities
	Municipalities	Municipalities	Municipalities
			Redevelopment authorities
Eligible project participants	Community-based organizations	Community-based organizations	Community-based developers
	Municipalities	Municipalities	Private developers
	Educational institutions	Educational institutions	Community development corporations
	Private-sector business and umbrella groups	Private-sector business and umbrella groups	
Review criteria	Vision and clarity	Vision and clarity	Vision and clarity
	Ability to execute	Ability to execute	Capacity of development team
	Alignment with community vision	Alignment with community vision	Alignment with community vision
	Strength of partnerships	Proven track record	Alignment with prior planning processes
	Articulation of economic needs, target populations, and economic opportunities		Consistency with fair housing and sustainable development policies
	Proven track record		Financial feasibility

			Evidence of site control Project density (see details below)
Kickoff event, applications open	October 5	October 5	October 5
Letter of intent submission	October 19	October 19	October 19
Initial applicants' call	October 21	October 21	October 21
Second applicants' call	November 16	November 16	November 16
Application deadline	December 11, 2015	December 11, 2015	December 11, 2015
Grants awarded	Mid-January, 2016	Mid-January, 2016	Mid-January, 2016

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Urban Agenda Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis. Grants will offer flexible funding to empower communities, and reward best practices in urban economic and housing development.

There will be three types of grants: Economic Development Implementation grants of up to \$500,000, Planning and Technical Assistance grants up to \$50,000, and Housing Program grants of up to \$200,000.

During the grant cycle, funded programs will be required to share best practices learned throughout the program with a larger statewide community cohort.

Economic Development Implementation Grants will request funding for a new program, or an expansion in the scope and partnerships, of work targeting specific economic opportunities and workforce populations. Implementation grants will be structured as two-year awards. Grants can be used to create new programs or scale up existing effective programs, but not to supplant funding for existing programs. Economic Development Implementation grants will be awarded in sums generally not to exceed \$500,000.

Planning and Technical Assistance Grants will be used by communities to bring residents and other stakeholders together for a facilitated process to identify opportunities for shared work on quality-of-life issues, and to build coalitions and social capital within the community. These grants may also build community coalitions that prepare communities to be more competitive for Urban Agenda implementation grants in future grant cycles. Planning and Technical Assistance grants will be awarded in sums not to exceed \$50,000.

Urban Agenda Housing Program Grants will assist municipalities in expanding housing opportunities by supporting predevelopment and soft costs related to the construction of multi-family housing on sites with demonstrated site control, and where the community has undertaken a planning process for the

site, and determined that development is financially feasible. Urban Agenda Housing Program grants will be awarded in sums generally not to exceed \$200,000.

CONTRACT STRUCTURE

Anticipated duration of the contract, including renewal options

The grant will be awarded for two fiscal years. However, the initial term of this Contract is expected to be January 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017. This Contract has three options to renew, of up to one year each. Options to renew are dependent on funding.

Acquisition Method and Compensation Structure

Fee for service that will be a maximum obligation contract. Payment schedule will be negotiated as part of contracting process.

ELIGIBILITY

Economic Development Implementation and Planning and Technical Assistance Grants

The purpose of this program is to promote local economic development, while cultivating collaboration and community leadership development. Joint applications are encouraged from entities within a community that possess proven track records in economic, housing, community and/or workforce development.

Municipal governments may be the lead applicant for these grants, but the grants are intended to support a coordinated group of community stakeholders. All project applications should have municipal buy-in, and should be submitted with a letter of support from the host municipality's chief elected officer.

Grants will serve urban communities that meet certain household income benchmarks (median household income less than 90 percent of the state's average income). HED has designed the grant program to serve both Gateway and non-Gateway cities, of varying sizes. Fifty-three urban communities are eligible to compete for grant funding. One application per grant program is allowed per municipality, but in cities with populations exceeding 150,000, applications will be capped at the level of clearly defined neighborhoods, rather than at the municipal level, enabling multiple applications from those cities.

Urban Agenda Housing Program Grants

The Urban Agenda Housing Program seeks to increase the supply of multi-family housing across the Commonwealth for a range of incomes. Urban Agenda Housing Program grants will assist municipalities in expanding housing opportunities, particularly housing opportunities that leverage vacant or under-utilized publicly-owned land, by supporting predevelopment and soft costs related to multi-family housing construction on publicly-owned land and other priority development sites.

Municipal governments and local housing and redevelopment authorities will be the lead applicants, although it is intended that grants will help municipalities and local housing and redevelopment authorities form or strengthen partnerships with outside developers, and quickly move financially feasible multi-family housing developments from the planning stage to active development. Grants are intended for the execution of prior planning efforts.

Eligible Municipalities – All Urban Agenda Grant programs

Amesbury	Greenfield	Pittsfield
Amherst	Haverhill	Provincetown
Attleboro	Holyoke	Quincy
Barnstable	Lawrence	Revere
Beverly	Leominster	Salem
Boston	Lowell	Somerset
Brockton	Lynn	Somerville
Cambridge	Malden	Southbridge
Chelsea	Marlborough	Springfield
Chicopee	Medford	Taunton
Clinton	Methuen	Waltham
Easthampton	Milford	Webster
Everett	New Bedford	West Springfield
Fall River	Newburyport	Westfield
Fitchburg	North Adams	Winthrop
Framingham	Northampton	Woburn
Gardner	Norwood	Worcester
Gloucester	Peabody	

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

Economic Development Implementation and Planning and Technical Assistance Grants

Urban Agenda Economic Development Implementation and Planning and Technical Assistance grants are meant to be grounded in local economic opportunities, rather than in prescriptive criteria.

Examples of the types of programs and partnerships the economic development implementation grants seek to fund include: a community commercial kitchen training at-risk residents for culinary careers in the local hospitality sector; business training and entrepreneurial supports for women-, minority- and veteran-owned businesses; and maker spaces that engage youth in mechanical processes, and feed participants into further skills-oriented educational programs. These are only illustrative examples. Applicants are encouraged to ground their program proposals in locally significant economic opportunities.

Planning and technical assistance grants will fund targeted planning exercises that address neighborhood quality-of-life issues, and build coalitions and social capital within the community.

Specific items that project applications should address include:

Vision

- Competitive applications will clearly articulate the vision, goals and outcomes of the program.
- Weight will be given to programs that can demonstrate how the program fits into a broader planning context, and assessment of the municipality's needs and strengths.
- Applicants should describe the neighborhood, economic, and social context in which proposed programs will operate, in order to place the work within a broader urban framework.
- Proposals that include measurable outcome metrics will receive more favorable consideration.

Partnerships

- Applications that demonstrate strong partnerships among local leaders, non-profits, the business community, and other public-private partnerships will be most competitive.
- Proposals must include a plan to note how the collaboration proposed by the partners is innovative and effective.
- Applications that demonstrate support from the city government and the legislature will be more competitive.

Target Population & Economic Opportunity (Implementation Grant Only)

- Priority will be given to proposals that clearly define and articulate the needs of the target population the program will support.
- Proposals should describe the opportunity that the applicant and partners anticipate meeting through this collaboration.
- Proposals should describe how the program will support and benefit the targeted population.

Project Plan

- Proposals should outline all the anticipated program activities and note whether the program is new, or an expansion of an existing program. If the program is scaled up from an existing program, documentation of the program's past effectiveness is required.
- Proposals must set out a clear timeline for program activities.
- Proposals must submit an operating budget for the program, including any potential matching funds. No match is required, but proposals that show community investment in the program will be more competitive.

Economic Development Implementation and Planning and Technical Assistance Grant applications will be reviewed on the strength of the following criteria:

Vision and Clarity

- Demonstrates the value of the program within the particular city, target population and economic sector
- Articulates the process, stakeholders and actions the program will take to support the target population within the sector opportunity
- More competitive application will demonstrate how the program aligns with community planning. This includes municipalities participating in the Community Compact

Strong Partnerships (Economic Development Implementation grants only)

- Shows thoughtful assembling of partners
- Demonstrates capacity of partners involved in the program
- More competitive applications will demonstrate strong support from the local government and the municipality's legislative delegation
- Innovation of the collaboration: leveraging existing strengths and developing new local capacity

Economic Need, Target Population and Local Economic Opportunity (Economic Development Implementation grants only)

- Shows a clear target population, with metrics and background
- Clearly articulates the needs of the target population
- Demonstrates the local economic opportunity within the community

Proven Track Record

- Project leads and partners show experience and success working with their chosen target populations
- Project leads and partners show experience and success working in their chosen economic areas

Ability to Execute

- The ability of the partners to execute the program
- Detail and feasibility of the action plan
- Clarity of the budget and matching funds
- Appropriateness of the timeline

Alignment with Community Vision

- Consistency of the proposal's goals and stated outcomes with the host community's larger strategic vision and economic aspirations

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND REVIEW CRITERIA**Urban Agenda Housing Program Grants**

Competitive Urban Agenda Housing Program grant applications will demonstrate a clear, compelling, and financially feasible vision for transforming vacant or underutilized parcels with multi-family housing development. Applicants should address the consistency of prior planning efforts with the housing development the Urban Agenda grant will advance. Applicants should also demonstrate an ability to efficiently and effectively deliver housing units to market. Applicants should demonstrate site control, financial feasibility of the proposed project, community support, and consistency with the Commonwealth's housing production, fair housing, and smart growth goals.

Municipalities, local housing authorities, and local redevelopment authorities from Urban Agenda-eligible communities should be the lead applicant for this grant program.

The amount of funds awarded will be commensurate with the proposed grant activities, and the anticipated impact of these activities on housing production. Grants will generally not exceed \$200,000. However, larger funding awards will be considered for projects of exceptional merit and complexity. Grants must be completed by June 30, 2016. All funding requests must be supported by a line-item budget (see attached application for details). Applicants will be responsible for attesting that all funds have been expended for their intended purpose.

In awarding funds, the grant review committee will give consideration to the geographic distribution of assistance. The grant review committee will also give consideration to an applicant's prior performance on other DHCD-awarded grants. The review committee will not award more than two grants to any one community.

Funding is available for a broad range of predevelopment activities leading to the production of multi-family housing. These grants are intended to implement prior planning efforts.

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- Schematic designs and site plans
- Community and resident engagement
- Market studies
- Financing plan
- Development of design documents
- Engineering/environmental assessment
- Environmental remediation and site cleanup
- Zoning review
- Title review

Urban Agenda Housing Program Grant applications will be reviewed on the strength of the following criteria:

- Vision and clarity of project plan
- Capacity of the development team

- Financial feasibility
- Consistency with sustainable development and fair housing principles
- Consistency with existing community and site planning efforts
- Ability to deliver quickly
- Applicant eligibility and application completeness
- Project eligibility
 - Housing for the site must be multi-family and meet a minimum density of 12 units per acre
 - Applicants must be able to demonstrate site control in the form of a deed or long-term ground lease
 - Applicants must provide evidence of an initial community planning process and a feasibility study showing that the site is a good candidate for multi-family housing development
 - The proposed site must be served by infrastructure needed to support multi-family housing development (water, sewer, gas, electric)
- Evidence that the proposed activities will lead directly to the production of multi-family housing within three years following grant completion
- The overall grant portfolio will achieve the following portfolio-wide targets: At least 10 percent of units program-wide will be 3-bedroom units to accommodate families, and no more than 20 percent of units program-wide will be age restricted.

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Economic Development Implementation, Planning and Technical Assistance, and Urban Agenda Housing Program Grants

A Review Committee for the Urban Agenda Grant Program shall provide feedback and recommendation to the Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development on the grantees of the Urban Agenda Grant Program. The Secretary of Housing and Economic Development shall appoint the review committee. The Committee shall be geographically inclusive and include the following representatives:

- 3 members from the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
- 2 members from Department Housing and Community Development
- 1 member from the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
- 1 member from the Executive Office of Education
- 1 member from the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation
- 1 member from MassDevelopment
- 1 member from the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's Working Cities Challenge
- 1 member from the Massachusetts Municipal Association
- 1 member from the University of Massachusetts
- 2 members representing regional planning agencies
- 2 members representing philanthropic and education institutions

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Applications will be available electronically at www.mass.gov/hed.
2. Prospective applicants should submit a letter of intent to EOHED by 5pm on October 19, in order to help organize the grant review teams. Submitting a letter of intent does not obligate a community to submit a proposal. Prospective applicants should email EOHEDgrants@massmail.state.ma.us.

The letter of intent should include the following information: The name, email address, and telephone number of the prospective lead applicant; the municipality where the proposed program will be located; the potential partners in the proposed program; and whether the prospective application will seek funding for an Economic Development Implementation grant, a Planning and Technical Assistance grant, or a Housing Program grant.

3. EOHED and DHCD staff will host two conference calls with prospective applicants. The calls will take place on October 21 and November 16, from noon to 1pm. Staff will post conference call details to the Urban Agenda Economic Development grant portal at www.mass.gov/hed, and will email conference call details to prospective applicants who submit a letter of intent.
4. Applications are due by 5:00 PM on December 11, 2015.
5. Applicants must submit an electronic copy of the application through the Urban Agenda Economic Development grant portal at www.mass.gov/hed. Fax copies of the application will not be accepted.
6. A cover sheet with the original signature in ink of the chief official or authorized representative of the lead applicant must be sent via US mail or other delivery service, and is due at EOHED by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, December 11, 2015. Applications from housing or redevelopment authorities also require signature of the Executive Director. An emailed application will not be considered complete until the cover sheet with the original signature is received. Submit one hard copy of the cover sheet with the chief official's original signature by mail to:

Urban Agenda Grant Program
Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
One Ashburton Place, Suite 2101,
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

7. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that its application is received by EOHED. All applications will be logged as to date and time received and kept on file as public record.

8. EOHED reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant or external sources as may be necessary in order to complete the application review.